

# WritersWeekly.com 24-Hour Short Story Contest

<http://24HourShortStoryContest.com/>

## GUIDELINES AND RULES FOR THE WRITERSWEEKLY.COM QUARTERLY 24-HOUR SHORT STORY CONTEST

Please print and keep this on-hand for start-time, which will be at 12:00 pm (noon) CENTRAL Time on the date that is listed on your email receipt.

### PRIZES

1st Place: \$300  
2nd Place: \$250  
3rd Place: \$200  
**+ 85 other prizes**

### THE JUDGING PROCESS

The first round of stories is judged by the employees of WritersWeekly.com. All stories are rated 1 to 10. Stories earning a score of 6 or higher are then read and judged solely by Angela Hoy, publisher of WritersWeekly.com, BookLocker.com, and the author of 19 books and thousands of articles. She determines the top three winners and the honorable mentions. Door prize winners are chosen at random.

<http://www.24HourShortStoryContest.com>

## CONTEST GUIDELINES

**RIGHTS:** For the top three winning stories, WritersWeekly.com requires non-exclusive electronic rights only because those are posted to our website. All other rights remain with all participants and those participants can publish their stories whenever and wherever they want. Stories that are not among the top three winners will not be published by us in any way, shape or form. **REPEAT - PARTICIPANTS RETAIN ALL RIGHTS TO THEIR STORIES. Contests that take rights to stories are greedy. We don't do business that way.**

1. If, on the date of the contest, you're checking the website for the contest topic and word count, don't forget to click "REFRESH" on your browser so it'll pop up after we upload it.
2. The contest topic will be emailed to all entrants at start-time and will be posted online here: <http://24HourShortStoryContest.com>

Some ISPs filter our list mailings (which is what the contest mailing is) as sp\*m. Therefore, you may not get the contest email. If that happens, pull the topic and word count (and rules!) from the web page above and start writing.

3. Compose your short story and e-mail it back to our office before the deadline. All entries are due at our office, in our mailbox, by 12:00 p.m. - noon - CENTRAL time - on **Sunday** (24 hours after start-time). Late entries will be disqualified. E-mail your entry to: <mailto:angela@writersweekly.com>

EMAIL YOUR ENTRY EARLY SO IT ARRIVES IN ANGELA'S IN-BOX ON TIME. Even if you send it a few minutes early...if it arrives in her in-box late, your entry will be disqualified. This requirement is mandatory because some entrants have been known to falsify the time on their computers to make it appear as though the entry was sent on time. Therefore, ALL ENTRIES MUST ARRIVE HERE, IN ANGELA'S EMAILBOX, BEFORE THE DEADLINE. We can't be held responsible for communication difficulties, late emails, etc. And, if your story fails to arrive, or arrives late, we can't give refunds, nor credits for future contests.

4. Your story must contain your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and word count AT THE END OF THE STORY. Please include your story in the text of your e-mail. Do not send e-mail attachments. ALL STORIES MUST HAVE TITLES. Type the title of your story

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at the top of your story. \*Very Important\* Type "24-Hour Contest" in the subject line of your email entry! This will enable us to pull any wayward entries out of our sp\*m filter.

## **General Rules:**

Even if you are a past-participant, please read these rules in their entirety!

Only single-author stories are permitted. No co-authored stories or teams, please. Reprints are not permitted. All entries must be composed within the contest time frame. By entering the contest, you certify that you have read these guidelines in their entirety and that you agree, on winning first, second or third place in the contest, to allow WriterWeekly.com to publish your winning entry on the WritersWeekly.com website. WritersWeekly only asks for the non-exclusive electronic right to publish the top three winning stories on our website. We don't take any rights at all from other entrants. Winners and others may, of course, publish their stories elsewhere.

**WORD COUNT:** The word count varies per contest. You will receive the word count when the topic is released at start-time.

**MORE:** Your story must touch on the contest topic in some way to qualify. During each contest, several writers ask if they must quote from the topic directly. No, you don't. You are even permitted to change the gender and age of the characters. But, it must be obvious to us that the story was written specifically for the assigned topic.

If you submit your story early, be sure to check your email about an hour before the deadline on Sunday to ensure we've sent you a confirmation (so you'll know your story made it). Don't wait until the last minute! Also, don't wait until the very last minute to send your story. Some ISPs (yahoo in particular!) take too long to send out emails and your story might arrive late.

We do \*not\* use an autoresponder to confirm receipt of stories. That is too risky. Angela personally and manually sends a confirmation out to all entrants. However, Angela does not stay up all night. If you send in your story in the middle of the night, you won't receive a confirmation until the following morning.

Even if you are a past-participant, please read these rules in their entirety!

**More:**

1. Your story does NOT need to quote the exact topic. It must only touch on the topic in some way to qualify. Lots of writers ask this question during each contest, so we want this to be perfectly clear. You don't have to quote the topic word-for-word, but you may if you like. It's your decision. Yes, you may change the gender and/or age of the characters in the topic above. You may make the characters any age you want them to be.

2. Don't forget to name your story!

3. The word count varies per contest. You will receive the word count when the topic is released at start-time.

4.a. *\*Very Important\** - Type "24-Hour Contest" in the subject line of your email entry! This will help us to pull any wayward entries out of our sp\*m filter.

4.b. Type your name, email address, mailing address, phone number and word count (not necessarily in that order) at the **\*\*END\*\*** of the story. (Lots of people break this rule. Breaking this rule is grounds for disqualification.) We will only use your phone number in case there is an emergency regarding your entry or if, heaven forbid, your winning check is returned undeliverable.

And, we never, ever share emails, phone numbers, addresses, names or anything with any other person or company. We do publish the email addresses of the winners on the WritersWeekly site so our readers can compliment their stories and send congratulations. You can request we not publish your email address if you're a winner. No problem at all.

5. Send your story in the text of an e-mail message. **DO NOT SEND EMAIL ATTACHMENTS** unless it is an emergency (your email starts cutting off parts of the story). If you must send an attachment, it must be a TEXT-ONLY file. All other attachments will be deleted. No fancy formatting, please, even in the body of the email, and no html emails permitted. Text-only emails and attachments. Italics may be indicated by using underscores around the italicized area \_like this\_.

6. Submit your story to [angela@writersweekly.com](mailto:angela@writersweekly.com) by the deadline, which is 12:00 p.m. Central Time on (Sunday) of the weekend of the contest (check your email receipt for the specific date).

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7. Very Important. Please don't submit your story early and then continue to make corrections and submit your story again... and again...and again. Do not send your story more than once. We will use the first version of the story you send in. The occasional typo will be overlooked, so don't get stressed if you find one in your story later. We're looking for good writers, not editors. Everybody makes typos, especially under pressure, and we understand. However, if a few stories are finalists and we're having a hard time making a decision, a story with few or no typos will come out ahead of one with multiple typos.

8. For easy reference, guidelines (and hints) and the date of the next contest are online at: <http://24HourShortStoryContest.com>

9. Sometimes writers submit their stories and later find odd characters, or that they are missing vast chunks at the ends of paragraphs because they have cut and pasted to their mail program from their word processor. (Please write your story in a text program, NOT A WORD PROCESSING PROGRAM, if you're not using your mail program as this will cut down on the possibility of missing chunks and odd characters appearing.)

Typing the story in the body of your email is the best way to send it without problems. But, remember to save often! Please make sure your entire story appears in your email before clicking "send." When we email you to confirm that we have received your story, your story will be included in that confirmation email. Please make sure the entire story is there...because that will show you what we received on our end. We can't be held responsible for partial entries. If you find part of your story missing, try sending us a text-only attachment. If you find odd characters appearing in your story, but it's still readable, don't worry. We can work with it.

10. Late stories are disqualified. During every contest, a dozen or so entrants submit their story late with an excuse (I was working in the garden, the baby spilled juice on my keyboard, my mother in law made me go to the mall, I got my time zones confused, I forgot today was contest day, etc.) and ask us to accept it anyway or ask if they can get a refund or be moved to the next contest. We can't do that. To be completely fair, everyone must follow the rules. Stories are due here by the deadline. Many contestants simply send in their stories late with no explanation. We assume they think we won't notice the story is late. Those stories are also disqualified because they are late. All late stories are disqualified. No exceptions.

If your email to us bounces back to you and does not arrive on time, we still can't accept it. Computers can easily be manipulated to make it appear something was sent before it actually was. However, the headers of each email contain info. which is difficult to manipulate, including when your ISP actually sent out the email and when it arrived on our server.

<http://www.24HourShortStoryContest.com>

Sending in a late story with the headers from your original submission won't work. If your story arrives late, you need to complain to your ISP, not to us. Threatening to sue us over late stories (yes, we've had a few jerks do that in the past) won't work either.

Stories must be IN Angela's in-box prior to the deadline. If your email program tends to send items out late or if you occasionally forget to release the mail in your queue or if your ISP has ever sent items out slowly or even if you're expecting bad weather that might cause you to lose your power or Internet connection, you should send your story early to accommodate for these possibilities. AOL.com, comcast.com, CS.com, yahoo and several other large ISPs filter more than 30% of legitimate email. If you use one of these services, you might want to consider giving us an alternative email address to use for corresponding with you.

Our rules are firm in this area. In fairness to everyone entered, we can't break the rules for one. All stories ~arriving~ after the deadline will be disqualified.

11. Sour Grapes - After the results of each contest are distributed, we almost always receive a sour grapes email from a contestant who claims that their mom (or friend, neighbor, etc.), thinks their story is far better than the winners' stories. Sadly, every time this has ever happened, the story in question was not even among the top entries. Friends and relatives are the worst to judge a writer's work. They just won't be honest because they don't want to hurt a loved one's feelings. The decision of the judges is final.

12. And, finally...please, if you love us, give us a good ending! 95% of the stories we receive fall flat at the end. It's very depressing for us when this happens. The ending can make or break your story.

What are the 11 most common mistakes writers make during the 24-Hour Short Story Contests?

11. Submitting domestic violence stories. That theme is WAY overdone on every contest, regardless of the topic.

10. Exceeding the word count, or submitting a 100-word story (obviously not even trying and simply hoping for a door prize).

9. Not naming the story.

8. Putting their contact information (and name!) before the story instead of after.

7. Making the story about a writer, or about someone named Angela (our publisher's name). These ideas are far too common and make the stories unoriginal.
6. Tons of typos, misspelled words and grammatical errors.
5. Using what was obviously a pre-written story that has nothing to do with the topic (but adding a sentence or two about the topic to try to fool us into thinking the story is about the topic). These are easy to spot.
4. Using a word processor to create the story, then pasting it into an email (causing odd characters to appear and large pieces of the story to get cut off).
3. Not writing "outside the box." Too many writers use the first idea that comes to mind when reading the topic. This always results in several similar stories being submitted.
2. Turning in the story after the deadline passes and then trying to convince us we received it on time and are lying to them about that (it's easy to prove when an email arrived by the headers on the email!). Also, trying to convince us to accept their story late because they forgot the contest was today. And, blaming us for emails not received (it's best to send the story early and then get confirmation that it was received rather than emailing us after the contest ends to ask us why confirmation wasn't received).

**And the #1 most common mistake writers make in the 24-Hour Short Story Contests is:**

1. Giving us a bad ending. :(

**Sign up today right here:**

<http://24HourShortStoryContest.com/>

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## More Helpful Links

**(Groan!) Common Themes That Pop Up in  
EVERY 24-Hour Short Story Contest...**

<http://wp.me/p6AmOv-8us>

**List of ALL PAST TOPICS and WINNERS of  
the WritersWeekly Quarterly  
24-Hour Short Story Contest!**

<http://wp.me/p6AmOv-6uK>

**14 Tips To Give Yourself A Leg Up In Writing Contests!**

<http://wp.me/p6AmOv-642>

**If you haven't already done so,  
you can sign up for the next contest right here!**

<http://24HourShortStoryContest.com/>